

# The Bible Jesus Used

**A Gospel-Centered Glance at the Old Testament**

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# A Biblical Theology of God's Land

## ❖ Summary Texts:

- ❖ Ps 24:1. The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein. Cf. 1 Cor 10:26.
- ❖ Exod 9:29. Moses said [to Pharaoh], “. . . The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's.
- ❖ Exod 19:5. . . . be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.

- ❖ **Deut 10:10**. Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.
- ❖ **Ps 50:12**. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine.
- ❖ **Job 41:11**. Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine. Cf. Rom 11:36: “for from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.”

## ❖ The Whole Earth, the Garden, and Mankind's Mission

### ❖ God created the whole earth.

❖ Gen 1:1–2. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth . . . .

### ❖ God placed at its center a garden on a mountain.

❖ Gen 2:7–14. Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground. . . . <sup>8</sup> And the LORD God planted a garden in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. . . . <sup>10</sup> A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. . . . <sup>11</sup> Pishon . . . that flowed around the whole land of Havilah . . . <sup>13</sup> Gihon that flowed around the whole land of Cush . . . <sup>14</sup> the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria . . . the Euphrates.

- ❖ **God's revealed purpose was that the garden paradise would expand to fill the earth with his glory.**
- ❖ **Gen 1:28. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion."**
- ❖ **Num 14:21. All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.**
- ❖ **Ps 72:19. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory!**
- ❖ **Hab 2:14. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.**

- ❖ **The evil one would be overcome by a male offspring.**
  - ❖ Gen 3:15. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
- ❖ **The ground was cursed due to mankind's sin.**
  - ❖ Gen 3:17, 23. Cursed is the ground because of you. . . . <sup>23</sup> Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.

❖ **The hope for deliverance carried on.**

- ❖ **Gen 6:28–29. When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son <sup>29</sup> and called his name Noah, saying, “Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.**

- ❖ **In God's covenant with Noah, he reasserted man's mission and ensured a context for redemption.**
- ❖ **Gen 8:21–9:1. And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. <sup>22</sup> While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. <sup>9:1</sup> And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."**



## ❖ The Promised Land and Israel's Mission

❖ Through Abraham and his offspring the curse would be reversed and the world blessed.

❖ Gen 12:2–3. Go from your country . . . <sup>2</sup> and I will make of you a great nation. . . . Be a blessing <sup>3</sup> . . . and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

❖ Gen 22:17–18. Your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup> and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

- ❖ **God promised Abraham the land of Canaan as the context for fulfilling this global mission.**
- ❖ **Gen 15:18. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To you offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.”**

- ❖ **Abraham would become a father of multitude of nations and not just Israel, implying that the land given to Israel would only be the center of God's ever-expanding rule (like the garden of Eden).**
- ❖ **Gen 17:5–8. I have made you a father of a multitude of nations. . . . <sup>7</sup>And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant. . . . <sup>8</sup> And I will give to you and to your offspring after the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.**

- ❖ **The land is portrayed as Eden, God's elevated sanctuary above the world.**
- ❖ **Exod 15:13, 17–18. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. . . . <sup>17</sup> You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. <sup>18</sup> The LORD will reign forever and ever.**

- ❖ **Israel's mission echoes Adam's, for they are to be royal priests in the context of the world, mediating and displaying God's image.**
- ❖ **Exod 19:5–6. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant and be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> then you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**
- ❖ **Synthesis: The promised land was to be the center of God's ever-expanding, world-encompassing kingdom. Israel was a people for mission, and the land was the launching point for global worship.**

## ❖ The Loss of Land and Restoration Promise

- ❖ Joshua and then David established Israel in the promised land, which pointed ahead to a greater, more lasting inheritance.
- ❖ Josh 21:43–44. Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. <sup>44</sup> And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands.
- ❖ 2 Sam 7:1. The king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies.

❖ **Like Adam and Even before them, Israel's sin resulted in their exile from paradise. But God promised a restoration on two fronts:**

❖ **(1) Return to the land**

❖ **(2) Reconciliation with God**

**The global mission of blessing for the sake of worship was never departed from.**

- ❖ **Jeremiah's 70 years of exile and then reconciliation.**
- ❖ **Jer 25:11–12. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. <sup>12</sup> Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation.**
- ❖ **Jer 29:10–13. When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. Cf. Jer 25:11–12.**



❖ Jer 30:8–11. And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the LORD of hosts, that I will break [Nebuchadnezzar's] yoke from your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more serve him. <sup>9</sup> But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. <sup>10</sup> But as for you, do not fear, O Jacob my servant, declares the LORD, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. . . . <sup>11</sup> I will make a full end of all the nations.

❖ Jer 31:33–34. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more.

- ❖ **Jeremiah's vision of the new covenant included both Jews and Gentiles under Yahweh their God and David their king gathered to a transformed Jersualem, wherein the whole city was the temple that could hold a renewed mankind.**
- ❖ **Jer 3:16–18. And when you have multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, declares the LORD, they shall no more say, “The ark of the covenant of the LORD.” It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again. <sup>17</sup> At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jersualem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart. <sup>18</sup> In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers for a heritage.**

❖ **Jeremiah portrayed the new covenant like a 2<sup>nd</sup> exodus out of exile into the promised land.**

❖ **Jer 16:14–15. Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, “As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” <sup>15</sup> but “As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.” For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.**